

**LINCOLN-SUDBURY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING
Tuesday, December 22, 2009**

7:30 p.m.

**Conference Room A
L-S Regional High School**

Present: Radha Gargeya, Chair, Mark Collins, Vice Chair, Nancy Marshall, Patty Mostue, Jack Ryan and Berne Webb

Also present: Scott Carpenter, Superintendent/Principal, Judy Belliveau, Director of Finance & Operations, Rami Alwan, Teachers' Association President, and Mary Whittemore, School Committee Secretary. Housemasters Leslie Gray, Iain Ryrie and Eleanor Burke were present as were the other visitors listed on the sign-in sheet attached to the approved minutes of this meeting.

Agenda Enclosures/Handouts

- Unapproved Minutes of December 9th meeting
- Radha Gargeya's statement made at the December 9th meeting in response to an article in the Sudbury Town Crier. The statement is also attached to the December 9th meeting minutes.
- Briefing Paper (Revised) by MASC dated 12/12/09 on the Race to the Top initiative
- Memorandum from Judy Belliveau dated December 17, 2009 re Race to the Top MOU
- Three documents related to Mass. Senate, No 2216, Education Report Act, prepared by the MASC.
- Memorandum from Judy Belliveau dated December 17, 2009 re FY'10 Final Adjustment
- Preliminary Apportionment of FY'11 Budget
- Two FY'11 Preliminary Budgets: one by Program and the other by Category of Expense
- Copy of the PowerPoint version of the FY11 Preliminary Budget as presented at the 12/9/09 meeting.
- PowerPoint slide presentation by the Housemasters with two attachments: Housemaster Job Description and "A Housemaster's Day in the Life..."
- Race to the Top Synopsis & L-S Superintendent/Principal's Recommendation
- L-S 5-Year Capital Plan dated 12/21/2009

I. Call to Order: Radha Gargeya, Chair, called the public meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. and confirmed that a quorum was present.

II. Public Comment

Radha Gargeya reminded those present of the protocol for public comment, namely that ten minutes is allotted for this portion of the agenda and each person has three minutes to make his or her statement. If there are questions, they should be addressed to the Chair and if they can be answered promptly they will be or, if not, the answer will be deferred until a later time.

Bryan Semple, Sudbury resident, introduced himself as the author of a recent article in the *Sudbury Town Crier* concerning what he considers to be the lack of fiscal transparency on the part of the School Committee. He noted that he had made the same statement at the Sudbury Finance

Committee meeting of December 21. He urged the Committee to provide “results oriented” information along with dollar figures. As examples, he suggested highlighting major features about each of the departments, such as number of teachers, their payroll, number of courses offered and the number of students taking Advance Placement tests in that area and the range of scores. How much are we spending on METCO and how many students are benefitting? How much are we spending on athletics, how many coaches and students are involved and what are some of their achievements? What percent of L-S students graduate? What percent go on to college? He urged the Committee to provide not only budget information in summary style, but also to enhance the presentation with data about the positive results of an L-S education. Mr. Semple stated that taxpayers cannot make an informed decision about a possible override vote if they do not understand the benefits that an override would produce.

III. Approval of Minutes

Patty Mostue made a motion to approve the minutes of December 9, 2009 as presented. Seconded by Nancy Marshall. The motion carried unanimously.

IV. Presentation by Housemasters

Iain Rylie, Eleanor Burke and Leslie Gray provided a PowerPoint presentation on the role and routine of the Housemaster position and the impact that reducing from four to three for FY10 has had on the job. Some of their major points included:

- The ratio of students to Housemasters has gone from 410 in FY09 to 536 in FY10.
- The number of teachers who need formal evaluation in the current year has gone from 16 in FY09 to 21 in FY10. This does not include the teachers who are not scheduled for a formal evaluation in the current year, but may still deserve some attention from their Housemaster.
- There have been some positive consequences of the house reduction including a smooth transition, the addition of a 3rd campus aide and enhancements to the Ipass system which documents disciplinary actions and provides e-mail notifications to parents.
- The negative consequences focus on the fact that the increased volume of students (and therefore parents) and teachers automatically diminishes the amount of time that can be spent with all three constituencies. Simultaneously the school community has not reduced its expectations of the services the Housemasters and House Assistants should deliver.
- Discipline is occupying more time than in the past. The Housemasters estimate that disciplinary issues have increased from 30% to 60% of their time. Scott Carpenter noted that some of this relates to interactions that go on outside of school, for example cyber-bullying and other on-line exposures, that are then brought into the school.
- The Housemasters agree that their jobs are significantly more reactive than proactive. They also agree that students, parents and teachers are not getting the same quality of support that they used to provide and that all three groups deserve.

Following some questions and answers by Committee members, the Chair allowed questions from visitors. Robert Stein, Liaison from the Sudbury Finance Committee to the School Committee, questioned why “Central House” had not been included in this presentation and challenged the Committee to provide information on that entity. Scott Carpenter responded that “Central House”, referred to in the program budget as “Central Program”, is simply the name of a program that deals with students who struggle significantly academically and who probably would not graduate without special services. Peter Fredrickson heads the program and is not a Housemaster. He is in the teachers’ association and is compensated in the same way as the department coordinators (teachers’ salary scale plus a stipend for running the program). There are currently 30 students in the program which historically was in a separate facility, but is now integrated into the L-S building. Radha

Gargeya encouraged Mr. Stein and others to attend the graduation for Central House students. Rami Alwan noted that how we deal with the weakest among us is the true measure of how we are doing. Judy Belliveau noted that the expenses related to Central House are evident in the “Student Services” section of the budget under “Central Program”.

Sudbury resident Rick Johnson suggested that it would help if the Committee could provide data that really speaks to the damage done to students, not the impact on Housemasters, because of the reduction of one Housemaster.

Patty Mostue suggested that the Housemaster’s presentation and the attachments go on the L-S website.

V. Presentation by Coordinator of Curriculum and Scheduling – deferred to a future meeting

VI. Recognitions

Scott Carpenter paid tribute to the following individuals and groups:

- The three Housemasters not only for their presentation but also for the job that they are doing. Scott noted that Iain Ryrie will be retiring at the end of this year and Leslie Gray is chairing the process for hiring a replacement.
- Tom Grandprey, Music/Band Director, and Jamie Kirsch, Choral Director, for the wonderful concert that was performed recently.
- The nurses who continue to deal with flu vaccines. Having completed their work with the intranasal vaccines, they now have injection vaccines available.

VII. Student Report – none

VIII. Teachers’ Association Report

Rami Alwan also thanked the nurses who are now taking care of flu shots for the staff as well as students. Rami reported that having been very disturbed by Bryan Simple’s article in the *Town Crier*, he had arranged to meet with him personally. As a result, Rami is doing some research on “best practices” in education and will report on that at a future meeting.

IX Superintendent’s Report

White House Pre-School Update

Scott reminded the Committee that his December 4th letter to parents of White House students had stated that there needed to be 15 children enrolled at all times in order for the program to continue after February 1. Scott and Radha had met with a parent recently and walked through the proposed space at the high school, determining several items that would be addressed in response to parent concerns. The parent reported back a few days later that, even with the space accommodations, there would not be enough students to sustain second semester. Therefore, the White House Pre-School will not operate after February 1st for the remainder of FY10. Judy Belliveau will be preparing bid documents to determine if there is another pre-school program that would like to operate from that facility next year. The other alternative is to hire a director on the condition that the school can be self-sufficient financially and does not drain on the L-S budget. Radha Gargeya commented that he regrets that the school will close due to under-enrollment, but that he respects each parent’s decision to do what they believe is in the best interests of their child(ren).

Robert Stein asked Ms. Belliveau to prepare a revised budget for the pre-school because the teachers would still have to be paid through the end of the year and the District would incur that cost.

Mr. Gargeya asked Mr. Stein to direct questions to the Chair of the School Committee. Mr. Ryan responded that the School Committee would ask Judy to generate reports that it wanted and deemed necessary.

Race to the Top (RTTT) MOU

Scott reviewed the possible benefits and liabilities that might accrue to L-S should the Committee decide to participate in the RTTT program. The primary benefit would be the possibility of \$5,500 per year for the next four years for Title I expenses. In addition to the likelihood of extensive paperwork and possibly more standardized testing in addition to MCAS, a significant liability is the potential that the School Committee might have to reopen negotiations with the Teachers' Association to modify their new contract to accommodate merit pay language. Having studied the existing material on RTTT and having weighed the pros and cons of participation by L-S, Scott recommended that the Committee not sign the Memorandum of Understanding which is due by January 13, 2010 because the direct and indirect financial costs would be more than the income.

Jack Ryan made a motion that the Lincoln-Sudbury Regional School Committee not authorize its Chair to sign the Race to the Top Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Seconded by Patty Mostue. Discussion on the motion concerned the timing of the MOU and whether or not additional information might be forthcoming.

Jack Ryan then made a motion to amend his main motion to incorporate the words "at this time" at the end of the sentence. Seconded by Nancy Marshall. The amendment passed with 5 votes in favor and 1 opposed.

The vote on the main motion as amended was 5 votes in favor and 1 opposed. The final motion therefore reads "That the Lincoln-Sudbury Regional School Committee not authorize its Chair to sign the Race to the Top Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education at this time". Given that the Committee's next regular meeting is January 12th and the signed MOU is due on January 13th, it was agreed that the Committee would need to have a special meeting in early January if new information suggested that RTTT participation might be favorable for L-S and the vote should be reconsidered.

X. Chairman's Report Education Reform Meeting

Radha Gargeya reviewed the highlights of the legislative meeting which took place on December 12, 2009 at the Assabet Regional Vocational School in Marlboro. One hundred school committee members from throughout Massachusetts heard presentations by three legislators, Sen. Steve Panagiotakos, Chair of the Senate Ways and Means Committee, and Sen. Robert O'Leary and Rep. Marti Walz, Co-chairs of the Joint Committee on Education. The topic was the major education reform legislation, the most significant since the 1993 Education Reform Act, which is currently going through the House and Senate. One of the main areas of the legislation is charter schools. It is likely that the legislation will raise the cap on the number of charter schools, but simultaneously build in greater accountability. In addition, Chapter 71 transportation funding will be merged with Chapter 70 funding when it comes to cuts, but will be kept separate as funds increase. Radha has invited the L-S District legislators Rep. Conroy and Senators Fargo and Eldridge to the January 12th meeting. In the meantime, Radha encouraged Committee members to read the material on Senate 2216, Education Reform Act, which was provided with the agenda.

G-4 Update

Radha report that the G-4 group, representing the school districts from Lincoln, Sudbury and Wayland, had met on December 15th and will meet again on January 13th for a kick-off meeting with an expanded group of participants. Each superintendent has appointed one representative to a number of topics for possible collaboration, such as technology, transportation, METCO, facilities, special education and the academic areas. The groups will brainstorm issues that they have in common as well as those that may be unique to one school district.

XI. Subcommittee Reports

Website Re-design Status

Radha and Nancy Marshall are working to provide more information on the site and to make it somewhat consistent with the L-S school site. They expect to have the first phase of the changes ready for the January 12th meeting.

XII. Information & Discussion

Continued Discussion of FY'11 Preliminary Budget and 5-Year Capital Plan

Judy Belliveau reported that Sudbury Finance Committee has now sent out its schedule of deadlines and hearing dates. The 5 Year Capital Plan which has been distributed to Committee members will go with the budget plan to both Lincoln and Sudbury finance committees.

XIII. Action Items

Jack Ryan moved that the School Committee vote to authorize transfers of \$47,960 from English department salaries and \$46,563 from Science department salaries to the Contingency account. Seconded by Mark Collins. The motion carried unanimously.

XIV. Other Business - none

XV. Bill Schedules – Warrants for December were signed by Committee members.

XVI. Calendar of School Events

December 23 at noon – Lunch provided by Building & Grounds staff – Committee members welcome to attend

December 28, 2009 Superintendent Letter for the Budget

January 12, 2010 Regular School Committee meeting to include budget updates and capital plan, visit by local legislators, presentation by Coordinator of Curriculum and Scheduling

January 15, 2010 Full Budget Book to Sudbury (tentative)

XIII. Adjourn

Jack Ryan moved that the meeting be adjourned at 9:50. Seconded by Nancy Marshall The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Whittemore
Secretary